

## The Crucible, Act Two

# Respond and Think Critically

## Reading Focus

### Quick Check

1. At the beginning of the act, why does Elizabeth want John to go to Salem?
2. What gift does Mary Warren give to Elizabeth?
3. According to Elizabeth, what is Abigail's true objective in court?
4. Why is Rebecca Nurse in jail?
5. To what does John Proctor want Mary to testify?

### Read with a Purpose

6. Describe the most significant components of the relationship between John and Elizabeth Proctor. Explain the metaphor of the "everlasting funeral" that John sees in Elizabeth's heart.

### Reading Skills: Drawing Conclusions About Characters

7. Why does Hale become suspicious of the Proctors? What is the irony in Hale's urging Proctor to show "charity"?
8. Use your chart from Acts One and Two to write a summary stating your opinion of the following characters: Reverend Parris, Mary Warren, John Proctor, Giles Corey, and one other character of your choice. Include a final statement in which you draw conclusions about the characters and explain reasons for their behavior.

## Literary Focus

### Literary Analysis

9. **Make Judgments** What do you think are the real reasons Mary gives Elizabeth the gift?

10. **Analyze** Describe Proctor's internal conflict.

How could it relate to a broader conflict in the play between public and private selves?

11. **Literary Perspectives** Are Mary's accusations against Sarah Good credible? Does Mary herself believe them? Explain.

### Literary Skills: Motivation

12. **Draw Conclusions** Regarding Mary's visions and accusations, what clues does Miller give for her motivation?

### Literary Skills Review: Figures of Speech

13. **Interpret** A word or phrase that describes one thing in terms of something else is a **figure of speech**. Identify the figure of speech from the following line in Act Two. Then, interpret its meaning: Lilac is the smell of nightfall, I think, Massachusetts is a beauty in the spring! (page 1123)

## Writing Focus

### Think as a Reader/Writer

**Use It in Your Writing** Several stage directions in *The Crucible* describe characters' thoughts, revealing unspoken conflicts. At one point, for example, Elizabeth Proctor "*is watching [John] from the table. . . . It is as though she would speak but cannot*" (page 1123). Briefly discuss what this stage direction adds to your understanding of the Proctors' relationship.

### What Do You Think Now

At this point in the play, who would you say is the protagonist, or central character? What does this character not have in common with the others.

For CHOICES see page 1162